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Inside APHIS

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Lonnie King Becomes Seventh Administrator on July 9

Associate since Feb. 1992 and acting since Oct. 1992, Lonnie King has now become the seventh APHIS administrator.

"Dr. King has a broad knowledge of both plant and animal agriculture and the veterinary profession through his government service and work with universities, major industry groups, and private practitioners," says Patricia Jensen, acting assistant secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs.

"This appointment is an affirmation of the importance of strong science-based organizations in agriculture," says King. "Appointment of a career person to this position sends a strong signal to our trading partners that APHIS is a scientific and technology-based organization. It is also a mark of our stability in times of change."

"During the last 3 years," continues King, "I have worked with many wonderful people in the agency. So I feel proud and privileged to be put into a position of leadership in this great organization."

King's appointment will have a domino effect on other acting agency appointments. Don Husnik, who reported to Washington, DC, on July 10, came in as the new Deputy Administrator for PPQ. Other positions long filled with employees in acting roles can now be filled permanently.

"Another thing I'm happy about," King adds, "is that now we can approach the visioning and reinvention issues that we have been working on with a new seriousness."



APHIS PHOTO BY KEN HAMMOND

I'm looking forward to helping make these initiatives happen."

Before beginning his government career in 1977, King was in private veterinary practice for 7 years in Dayton, OH, and Atlanta, GA. Past assignments have included field veterinary medical officer in

Georgia and station epidemiologist in Texas. King spent 5 years in Hyattsville, MD, in staff assignments for VS, including directing the development of the agency's National Animal Health Monitoring System.

King left APHIS briefly to serve as the director of the Governmental Relations Division of the American Veterinary Medical Association in Washington, DC. From 1988 to 1991, King was VS deputy administrator.

As a native of Wooster, OH, King received his bachelor of science and doctor of veterinary medicine degrees from The Ohio State University. King earned his master of science degree in epidemiology from the University of Minnesota while on special assignment with USDA in 1980. King also received his master's degree in public administration from American University in Washington, DC, in 1991.

King, his wife Silvia, and daughter live in the metropolitan Washington, DC, area. His son lives in Madison, WI. ♦

In This Issue

Page 3

At their first national meeting, identifiers hone their skills.

Page 4

With ITS, a new virtual service organization is born.

Page 6

Group of former employees consider forming an association.

Page 9

Pull-out section on the Strategy Conference: taking the first steps toward realizing the vision.

Page 14

Five field offices report on taking their children to work.

Page 18

Remembering the dead in Oklahoma: several memorial services.

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor:

A few words can never adequately thank all of the APHIS personnel who came to our aid following the tragedy in Oklahoma City on April 19. From within hours following the bombing, through the Day of Remembrance, and continuing up to today, the people of APHIS have been providing support, both with deeds, thoughts,

and prayers, which have been so important to both the families of the seven victims and to the survivors here in Oklahoma.

Those who think that Government agencies are cold and impersonal have only to look at APHIS to change that opinion. APHIS is a family, and as such, shares in the triumphs and tragedies of its members. We have heard talk of "one APHIS" prior to these events,

but in Oklahoma we now know that "one APHIS" is a reality.

Just as the families of the victims were assured at the Day of Remembrance [see page 18] that APHIS would always remember those who perished, we would like to assure those in APHIS that we in Oklahoma will always remember your response in our time of need.

Brian Espe, OIC, VS
and all Oklahoma City employees

Agency Now Has a Home Page Available on the Internet

Internet users all over the world can now get information about the agency through the Internet. An intraagency Internet working group has established a "home page" on the Internet's World Wide Web, and this page provides easy access to a variety of information about us and our programs, according to LPA's Larry Mark, chair of the Internet working group.

The APHIS home page is linked to USDA's home page, which in turn can be accessed from the White House home page. The Universal Resource Locator (URL) address on the Internet for the

APHIS home page is
<http://www.aphis.usda.gov>.

What Users Can Do

Through the APHIS Web, users will be able to:

- Access the Web pages of APHIS program areas;
- Take a "guided tour" to show in pictures what APHIS does;
- Scan a directory of key APHIS offices;
- Check out new rules proposed by APHIS;
- Connect to the APHIS Gopher; and
- Use designated search terms

to look for information on various APHIS programs.

Links from the Web to the APHIS Gopher provide access to more than 165 factsheets, publications and other documents providing information about a variety of plant and animal health issues.

"We have an index of designated search terms that describe APHIS activities," Mark says. "This makes it easy for users to reach the information they are interested in quickly. Someone wanting material on boll weevils, for instance, can find a number of factsheets on this insect.

(See INTERNET on page 16)

Two Offices Help Develop a new IDEA

Electronic links with headquarters and the field move a step closer to reality with the Information Dissemination Electronic Access System (IDEA). VS' Centers for Epidemiology and Animal Health in Ft. Collins, CO, developed the IDEA directory structure several years ago to allow field employees to retrieve State regulations for interstate transportation of animals and international export requirements for animals. When M&B's Management Services Division (MSD) began looking for a system that would store and transmit large pieces of information electronically, VS called MSD and said they already had such a system. VS' Tim Dye and other Ft. Collins computer technicians volunteered to help MSD expand IDEA to include MSD needs.

IDEA now has address directories, administrative notices, directives, and the APHIS Forms Catalog. In the future MSD plans to include the Safety and Health Manual, the Records Management Handbook, the Motor Vehicle Manual, and the Supervisor's Desk Guide. VS offices nationwide already have IDEA, and so do headquarters in Riverdale, MD, and some field offices. MSD employees are now meeting with headquarters programs to coordinate access rights to all program field offices. If field offices haven't heard anything from their resource management staff or computer representative by the time they read this, they can call VS' Renee Klund or Wanda Smith at (970) 490-7900. Klund and Smith will make sure they get the IDEA! ♦

Inside APHIS

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Identifiers Increase Taxonomic Skills at First National Meeting



APHIS PHOTO BY MITCH NELSON

National mycologist Mary Palm (on left) and NIS branch chief Rebecca Bech talk to plant pathologist identifiers in the plant pathology workshop. Pathologists (from left) are Maria Perez, Houston, TX; Ninfa Guerrero, Brownsville, TX; Stephanie Burgess, Miami, FL; Mussa Abdelshife, Los Angeles, CA; Michael Guidici Pietro, San Francisco, CA; Joel Floyd; Nogales, AZ.

PPQ identifiers of all three disciplines—entomology, botany, and plant pathology—came together at Beltsville, MD, last May for their first national meeting. Forty of the 44 identifiers nationwide were present. They used the opportunity to network, to learn about their roles in the present and future workforce, and to increase their expertise in identification.

"The main responsibility of identifiers is to identify the pests intercepted on commodities imported into the country," says Rebecca Bech, chief of National Identification Services, a branch of PPQ's Biological Assessment and Taxonomic Support staff. "Because of this responsibility, identifiers are located at most major ports of entry throughout the United States," Bech adds.

Bech and Agricultural Research Service's (ARS) Manya Stoetzel, supervisory research entomologist, opened the meeting. Ralph Wikstrom, consultant in M&B's Human Resources Division, helped facilitate the meeting. Glen Lee, retired PPQ deputy administrator, talked to the group about the challenges PPQ faces as a leader in facilitating trade.

In sessions on employee issues, Paul Eggert, PPQ assistant to the deputy, and Bech facilitated discussions on creating career ladders and establishing specialty

areas for identifiers; Joe Cavey, PPQ staff entomologist with National Identification, facilitated discussions on workflow and the implementation of a new pest interception data base.

The group also saw a demonstration of Sun Microsystems' new computerized imaging system. The Zeiss company assisted with this demonstration and provided a microscope and camera. This system allows users to transmit

images of pests to other identifiers or to the national taxonomic specialists. APHIS and ARS experts can then verify the identification of the pest and, if necessary, make comparisons with specimens in the National Collection.

"You can even scan in two images side by side for comparison," says Bech. "For this reason, the system is also a beautiful training tool. We're looking at setting up a pilot project using the system. It's the future direction of identification."

Identifiers spent the last day in workshops of the various taxonomic disciplines. In the workshops they looked at difficult or unusual groups of specimens and worked on identification problems. ARS experts from the Systematic Entomology Laboratory and APHIS national identifiers were technical consultants. The workshops were on wood-boring beetles, thrips, mealybugs and scale insects, grass genera, and fungi. ♦



APHIS PHOTO BY ERIC JOHNSON

Entomology identifiers Chuck Brodel, Ft. Lauderdale, FL, (left) and Glen Landau, Charleston, SC, look at specimens during the wood-boring beetle workshop.

A New Customer Service Organization for One APHIS

For the past year, culture shifts have been taking place throughout the agency. Emerging from these shifts are team-based organizations whose major thrust is customer service. Information Technology Services (ITS) is the result of an agencywide major shift to putting the customer first and serving that customer through technically competent teams based throughout the agency in a "virtual organization."

The CIO

"ITS is a tangible move in the direction of 'one APHIS'," says David Gradick, new Chief Information Officer (CIO) for ITS. "In reorganizing the agency's information resources, we are taking people who formerly worked in different programs (often competitively), putting them together, and asking them to work cooperatively."

The blueprint for ITS, and the major paradigm shift, came after a number of preliminary studies indicated a real need for change. In a study by Phase One of the Information Systems Planning team in 1993, members of this team described an agency in which each unit was developing its own information systems; many had similar functions, duplication was common, and most could not share information with each other.

"For example," says Mike Gregoire, newly detailed to the ITS management team, "less than 2 years ago, the agency had more than 350 application systems—45 in finance and 60 in property management. I spent 15 years in finance, and I can tell you all those systems aren't necessary even in an agency as diverse as APHIS."

"In addition," says James DeCoster, also on the ITS management team, "some units invested a lot in information technology and others didn't. A have/have not climate developed within the agency with respect to information resources management (IRM)."

The Information Systems Planning team recommended restructuring the IRM function into single organization that would serve the whole agency.

A Roles and Responsibilities Working Group devised a plan for agencywide management of information resources. It recommended

to the APHIS management team (AMT) that IRM service delivery be centrally managed but geographically dispersed. Members of this task force were Bill Clay, ADC; Bill Buisch, VS; Alfred Garcia, PPQ; Alan Christian, REAC; Chris Zakarka, R&D; David Gradick, M&B.

Last December, the AMT agreed to this plan with several important modifications: First, ITS would be a virtual organization; that is, ITS employees and resources would remain in their present organizations, but they would work for ITS.



APHIS PHOTO BY LAURIE SMITH

New CIO of ITS, David Gradick

Second, ITS would be a reinvention laboratory. "The AMT wanted to avoid the traditional reorganization," explains Gregoire, "and it wanted to encourage a spirit of experimentation. By making ITS a lab, the AMT could try the experiment for a year, evaluate it, and

make modifications."

"Actually, ITS has only five true employees," says Gradick, "the four functional area coordinators (see sidebar) and me. All the rest, over 200, are IRM employees." These virtual employees were picked by their classification series. All 334's (computer specialists) and 391's (telecommunication specialists) are in ITS. The 335's (computer assistants) are in ITS if they spend time helping people solve problems with their systems. If their activities are limited to data entry, inclusion in ITS is up to program unit managers.

In addition to 334's and 335's, former managers of computer specialists are part of ITS, and also M&B's forms and records management employees because they manage forms and records—the manual equivalents of data input and computer data bases.

A Business Advisory Team (BAT) completes the new IRM structure. Composed of a senior-level manager from each program unit, BAT serves as a board of directors or advisory council and gives ITS a continual customer perspective. It also helps ITS decide policy and resource allocation issues.

To become operationally ready, ITS managers have held several conferences—xtwo in Riverdale and one in Denver. Conferences focused on hearing employees' and customers' concerns, forming teams, and developing a plan of attack for each team.

"This month [July] we are implementing our organization," says Gradick, "except for people in locations below the regional level.

ITS Functional Areas and Coordinators

- **Customer Services.** Primary purpose: Ensure ITS meets ongoing program needs. Coordinator: Mike Gregoire.
- **Technology Resources Management.** Primary purpose: Plan, implement, and maintain the agency's hardware systems (platform operations), the linkages between them, and their security. Coordinator: Tim Dye.
- **Applications and Information Management.** Primary purpose: Develop and maintain software applications and coordinate data and database administration across the agency. Coordinator: James DeCoster.
- **Forecasting and Planning Services.** Primary purpose: Integrate and align IRM service delivery and planning with agency priorities and needs; plan and execute major acquisitions; coordinate investigation of future technologies; coordinate workforce planning. Coordinator: Chris Zakarka.



APHIS PHOTO BY LAURIE SMITH

Robert Smoot (M&B/ITS) talks to Eileen Welch (PPQ/ITS) and Victor Unruh, Jr. (REAC/ITS) during an ITS startup meeting.

These others will be brought on in 3 to 6 months. Because we're a lab, we're filling the leadership positions as term appointments for up to 5 years, until the AMT evaluates the success of the new organization."

Focus on Customer Service

At the heart of the new organization is the focus on customer service. Everyone in ITS has a home-based team revolving around a particular set of customers or technical specialty, but each ITS employee will have customer contact. "We want to empower our employees to give service," says Gradick. "Then the level of service will go up."

"In the past, employees reported to their supervisors and tried to please them," continues Gradick. "Now, we're flip-flopping the system. We're no longer interested in making the boss happy, but in making the customer happy. Employees right now still ask us for direction, but this need reflects the old system. Soon, working on teams, they will be telling us what they need to support their customers."

PPD's Evaluation Services is designing measures of customer satisfaction, explains Gradick. "We will use these to gauge the effectiveness of ITS and for evaluating the reinvention lab as well."

"Even though most ITS employees are used to reporting to programs, they actually enjoy having the opportunity to work together across program lines."

Gradick adds. "We expect to achieve some quick and impressive successes."

ITS has gathered data on hundreds of projects needed to get IRM in APHIS to a position of excellence—everything from permit systems and wide-area networks to tracking systems for correspondence. As BAT helps prioritize these projects, ITS managers will create virtual project teams, which will exist long enough to accomplish these projects. After the projects are complete, team members will return to their home-based teams.

REAC Information System

"One project we're well into," says DeCoster, "involves building an information infrastructure for REAC. In the past, REAC was one of the have-not units. Now, we have a team—led by John Stephens of VS—assessing and evaluating REAC's hardware and software with the idea of building that unit's infrastructure across the board to meet REAC's needs. This team is modifying and re-engineering REAC's compliance investigative tracking system and a licensing and registration system."

Some of the projects will demand multiple teams and resources over extended periods, Gradick says. For example, the Forecasting and Planning Services (F&PS) functional area under Zakarka's leadership will spearhead the implementation of the Integrated Systems Acquisition Project. Deploying ISAP across the agency will require cooperation

with all parts of ITS and all APHIS units. It will take years to complete. At present, employees of the Office of the Trail Boss are located in F&PS. The ISAP contract is now scheduled to be awarded in mid-August.

It's critical that ITS employees have the technical expertise to tackle major projects like ISAP. "Formerly," Gradick says, "APHIS thought of IRM as an administrative function. Now, agency leaders are looking at ITS as a highly technical function requiring specialized skills and training." At the Strategy Conference (see page 9), participants placed the ITS function with the Scientific and Information Technology strategy, making IRM an integral part of mission and program delivery.

"A great advantage in bringing together all IRM employees is that we can train them efficiently," says DeCoster. "A disadvantage right now is the disparity in the level of proficiency of ITS employees. The units have made different levels of investment in training computer specialists. We need both time and resources to get all of our people adequately trained."

Paying for Virtual Employees

One of the problems still unresolved is paying for travel and training in a virtual organization, Gradick says. ITS managers decide on the kinds of experiences necessary to develop their employees' competencies, but the program units must still fund ITS' travel and training. The result is potential conflicts in goals and priorities between ITS and the units that house IRM employees.

Many personnel issues also remain to be resolved. To meet the needs of ITS personnel, ITS managers are turning to new personnel practices. These include development of core competencies, establishment of uniform position descriptions (reduction from 150 to about 15), and exploration of pay banding, a concept of ranking levels of core competencies as low, medium, or high and paying a person according to the level of competency. This mechanism is still at the experimental stage in Government and is not yet available.

Though ITS still has details to work out, now that it's operational, customers can look forward to many IRM changes. ♦

Focus on Retirees

Retiree Group Gauges Its Potential For Success

By Terry Hall, PPD

Recently a survey went out to 600 former APHIS employees asking if they would be interested in joining a former employee/retiree association. A team of former and current employees will use the data from this survey to help them determine if there is interest in establishing an association and to gauge its potential for success.

The 600 were asked for their thoughts on the organization's purpose, on their willingness to pay dues and to serve as officers, and for steps that would contribute to the group's success.

Of the 125 employees responding to the survey, many were interested in maintaining a professional relationship with the agency—88 said they would become members, and 89 would pay dues. Seventy indicated they would serve in a leadership capacity at the state or national level. Many also expressed the need for a group that could be

their contact with APHIS.

With the returned surveys came requests attesting to the need for a service center for these former employees: "Please add me to the *Inside APHIS* mailing list," said one. "I have not been able to reach so and so. Please see that he receives the enclosed documents," wrote another.

When asked what services or functions a former employee/retiree group might perform, they suggested the following:

- Include an information exchange aspect, such as a directory of former employees.
- Help us to keep in touch; hold social events; produce a newsletter.
- Continue to inform us of current happenings in the agency.
- Set up and maintain some sort of library or archives facility.
- Give information on taxes, annuities, and medical coverage for retirees.

Some expressed an interest in actively assisting in the mission of APHIS, either by volunteering or through fees for services. Others suggested ways the agency could

Forum For an Association

A group of retirees and former employees is meeting monthly in Riverdale, MD, to consider forming an association. Issues the group is addressing include whether to:

- Charge annual dues.
- Form a non-profit association.
- Open chapters in States with large retiree membership.
- Have bylaws and become incorporated.
- Seek financial support from industry to hire a part-time executive director.

For more information, or to join this group, call Frank Mulhern, at 301-982-9729 or write in care of *Inside APHIS*.

use former/retired employees—as consultants, for recruiting new employees, to give orientation, and to develop a roster of the various areas of expertise. ♦

Notes From the First APHIS Administrator

The following excerpts are from Frank Mulhern's notes of the June meeting of retirees. The group meets on the first Wednesday of each month.

... We were not able to have retiree Norvan Meyer attend the meeting by phone because the meeting conflicted with his therapeutic sessions at his hospital. Another retiree, Larry Slagle, had recently received a heart transplant, and it was too soon for him to participate in our meeting. We hope he will participate from home in our next one.

... A lot of discussion took place about activating former employee associations in the States. Terry Hall discussed a law that allows space in Federal buildings to be used by the public when not in use by official employees. We will try to get someone from OGC or GSA to talk to us
(See MULHERN, on page 7)



APHIS PHOTO BY LAURIE SMITH

Former Administrator Frank Mulhern at the June meeting of retirees in Riverdale, MD.

Shhhhh—Undiscussibles Are Being Mentioned!

By Cindy Mowatt, M&B/ITS

"What are we going to do with the 14's?" "My boss tells me not to go to ITS!" "Why am I here?"

During the Information Technology Services (ITS) workshop held for employees in Riverdale, MD, these were some of the "undiscussibles" mentioned. Chief Information Officer David Gradick provided employees with a forum for them to feel comfortable about discussing the hot topics.

Many employees voiced concerns and related their experience in dealing with their current supervisors. It was apparent that some managers have raised concerns and objections to the virtual organizational structure soon to be in place. Gradick stressed the importance for employees to continue their involvement with ITS and to alert their functional unit team leader about problems they may experience during this transitional stage. Gradick is meeting individually with supervisors who may have questions regarding this new business strategy.

Gradick also addressed the concern about the many GM-14's currently in the ITS organization. A new functional unit, Project Management, was designed at the conference for these employees. This functional area will begin to manage the enormous number of projects ITS has on the slate. Knowledge of the business areas and structures of APHIS makes participation by 14's in the functional teams extremely valuable.

Many employees are concerned and anxious about their involvement in ITS. This new concept should be viewed as an opportunity to expand the computer expertise in APHIS. The overall benefits as I see them are twofold.



APHIS PHOTO BY LAURIE SMITH

Clockwise, Tiffany Skintges and Trish Anelli of M&B/ITS, and Robin Cecil, PPQ/ITS, in break-out groups for customer service.

First and foremost is customer delivery and service. For years, the customers were dependent upon their own individual information resource management (IRM) personnel. For many of these computer specialists, their time was divided between application development, long-term planning/forecasting and LAN duties. They didn't have time for large-scale projects, so many were placed on the back burner. Under ITS, employees who are highly skilled in one area (application development, for example) will have time to focus their attention on an activity without jumping from one project to another.

The second big benefit of ITS is the expansion of knowledge and skills of IRM personnel. By working on projects for a variety of offices, all ITS employees will expand their knowledge of the APHIS structure and business areas. No longer will one organizational unit contain the "dream team" of

computer specialists. The whole agency will benefit from having available the wide variety of skills and abilities of all ITS employees.

Can you imagine the frustration experienced by the first set of employees who built a computer? These dedicated individuals changed the course of history. Perhaps some of these computer programmers said, "Why are we doing this?" "What are we doing?" "What purpose will it serve?"

Well, I am glad this team of individuals worked out answers among themselves. We have come a long way since the first computer. It takes time, patience and devotion to do something different. ITS is offering about 250 employees the opportunity to dream, design, and execute the next generation of information technology in APHIS. Perhaps with desire, enthusiasm and a little luck, we can change the course of APHIS information management. ♦

Mulhern, from page 6

further on our rights in this regard at the next meeting.

... Employee Eileen Welch and retiree Frank Germaine expressed interest in developing procedures to have items placed in the Archive Section of the library in Riverdale, MD. They will have more ideas at our next meeting.

... We need someone who is gifted and interested in summariz-

ing the key points that take place in our meetings and in writing up items of interest that we receive from retirees living in different parts of the country. John Kennedy's name was mentioned, but he has his own consulting firm, so this may prevent him from becoming involved. However, we will contact him.

... We urge former employees both in the Washington, DC, area and in the States to send items to

Inside APHIS. For example, we learned that retiree Grant Blake is touring or has recently toured New Zealand. His experience may help others to plan such a trip. We would like to have a special section in the employee newsletter about former employees' activities. The feasibility team thinks we should start by communicating through *Inside APHIS*, and hopefully someday we can have our own newsletter. ♦

Agencies Unite To Reinvent the Passenger Inspection Process



PPQ employees on the NPR initiative, clockwise: Connie Taft, San Diego, CA; Althaea Langston, Riverdale, MD; George Jelinek, Jamaica, NY; Sonia Dabulis, Moorestown, NJ; Lee Newport, Miami, FL; Andrea Rodriguez, Brownsville, TX; Tom Wallenmaier, Detroit, MI; Janis Garich, Detroit, MI; Charles Emery, Rouses Point, NY; John Vigil, El Paso, TX.

APHIS PHOTO BY LAURIE SMITH

An interagency opportunity for overhauling the port-of-entry inspection system has arrived, and PPQ employees have until this August to help design a new process.

As part of an National Performance Review (NPR) initiative, PPQ employees are working with their colleagues at the U.S. Customs Service, Immigration and Naturalization Service, and the Department of State's Consular Affairs Division to reinvent the Federal passenger inspection system at Canadian and Mexican land ports of entry and at international airports.

Seamless Inspections

As stated in the official charter of NPR's Business Process Reengineering (BPR) project, the purpose is "to design integrated, efficient, and effective primary inspection processes at air and land ports of entry. BPR teams will produce blueprints for establishing seamless and non-intrusive primary inspection processes that meet all agencies' mission requirements."

The interagency project began on May 8, and the final report recommending changes to NPR is due on August 8. At the May 17th kick-off meeting in Tysons Corner in Virginia, ranking officials from

each of the four participating agencies expressed to NPR their commitment to this effort. Representing APHIS, Charles Schwalbe, Acting Associate Deputy Administrator for PPQ, encouraged team members to focus on customer satisfaction and interagency cooperation.

"Why change the status quo? If we don't, someone else will—and we probably won't like the results."

—Charles Schwalbe

"Many people have a hard time thinking of people we deal with at ports as customers, but we as inspectors have to make key changes because we don't do this for our own benefit," says Schwalbe.

"Why change the status quo?" Schwalbe continues. "Not just

because this is a golden opportunity, but if we don't, someone else will—and we probably won't like the results. We all need to be advocates to keep this alive after August."

PPQ's Team

PPQ's NPR Coordinator is Sonia Dabulis, Northeast Regional program manager. She is coordinating with the three interagency teams who will evaluate northern border, southern border and airport processes separately. On each team, PPQ has three representatives, who represent headquarters, the field, and employee unions. Althaea Langston, George Jelinek, and Lee Newport are on the airport team; Tom Wallenmaier, Charles Emery, and Janis Garich are on the northern team; and Andrea Rodriguez, John Vigil, and Connie Taft are on the southern team.

"This project is more than an opportunity to design a plan to improve the primary inspection process because we are meeting with our colleagues on common ground and learning about each others' missions," Dabulis said.

NPR will use the blueprints that the BPR teams submit in August to develop reinvention laboratories and pilot projects charged with implementation. ♦



The APHIS Vision

We bring food to your table, stimulate global economies, safeguard agricultural resources, and protect and enhance ecosystems.

We are a highly motivated and capable team of diverse individuals who share leadership within an agency community that cares about our professional and personal lives.

Conference Participants Produce Strategies for Change

Implementation of the Change Agenda Will Help Us Move Toward the Vision

By Anna Cherry, Public Affairs, LPA

Last February, an agencywide group of about 80 employees met at Solomons Island, MD, and began creating the APHIS of the future. During this Visioning Conference, the group envisioned a meaningful, efficient, effective, and caring organization. In May, more than 100 employees continued this evolutionary process by participating in the Strategies Conference. Conference participants were charged with devising strategies to move APHIS toward the vision.

This weeklong conference in Riverdale, MD, resulted in the change agenda. To make the APHIS vision a reality, the first steps include implementing the 1995/96 change agenda.

Change agenda strategies include both internally and externally focused items—that is, some of the strategies will change how APHIS functions and others will change what we do. The change agenda strategies include achieving the vision, supervisory and managerial leadership, shared

leadership through teamwork, customer service: preparing employees, valuing people through continual learning, scientific and information technology, innovative regulatory systems, global interests, and environmental responsibility.

Champions have been identified for each of these strategies, and those people will lead the change effort from the level of the APHIS management team. However, each employee plays an essential role in realizing the vision in each part of APHIS. ♦



APHIS PHOTO BY LAURIE SMITH

Conference participants were divided into 12 vision element groups (VEG's). Each VEG worked hard to define the change agenda and list ways to implement it.

The APHIS Change Agenda 1995-96

• **Achieving the APHIS Vision**

Champions: Patrick Collins, Sharon Coursey, Don Luchsinger

To bring the APHIS vision to reality, we need to (1) communicate the vision internally, (2) implement cultural change within the agency, and (3) communicate the vision to our stakeholders. Bear in mind: The APHIS vision is designed to empower employees and encourage initiative. If you recognize any change you can make to improve your own work or customer service, just do it!

• **Supervisory and Managerial Leadership**

Champions: Phyllis York, Sally McCammon, John Payne

Recognize that managers and supervisors are leaders and that in a shared-leadership organization, different leadership skills are required of managers and supervisors. APHIS managers and supervisors will undertake innovative leadership techniques that will expedite the change from a command-and-control leadership role to a coaching-and-facilitating leadership role.

• **Shared Leadership Through Teamwork**

Champions: Dan Stone, Sharon Coursey, Alex Thiermann

Share leadership at all levels through a team-based organization. Whenever possible, form teams that cross unit lines and academic disciplines to complete specific work tasks; disband teams when the task is complete. Team makeup is based on obtaining appropriate skills, knowledge, and experience from wherever they may reside. APHIS will be better prepared to accomplish its mission through teamwork, and employees will be valued for their leadership contributions.

• **Customer Service: Preparing Employees**

Champions: Dale Schwindaman, Bobby Acord, Al Elder

Prepare employees to be customer oriented through continual learning, empowerment, evaluation, and developing partnerships. Continual learning and empowerment will give employees the tools to understand, refine, and better participate in customer service practices. Evaluate

customer service will enhance continual improvement.

• **Valuing People Through Continual Learning**

Champions: Sharon Coursey, Phyllis York

Demonstrate, promote, and facilitate continual learning as a business strategy needed to exceed our customers' expectations and survive and thrive in an environment of accelerated change.

• **Scientific and Information Technology**

Champions: Al Elder, Sally McCammon

Develop and manage information as an agency resource to address agency needs. The goal is to improve program delivery through the development and communication of scientific, technical, and administrative information.

• **Innovative Regulatory Systems**

Champions: Bill Wallace, Dale Schwindaman, Patrick Collins

In developing regulatory systems, use innovative approaches that continually push the legal envelope, that provide new incentives to invite willing customer compliance, and that achieve program objectives at the lowest public and private costs (taking into account that costs may include environmental, social, and other nonmonetary impacts). In addressing problems, always consider whether objectives can be achieved through nonregulatory as well as regulatory methods.

• **Global Interests**

Champions: Alex Thiermann, Don Luchsinger, Bill Wallace

Ensure that the agency, its customers, and international and national partners think and act globally. Accomplish this change by incorporating international standards and marketing concerns in all aspects of domestic agricultural programs.

• **Environmental Responsibility**

Champions: Bobby Acord, John Payne

Develop and implement systems that assure environmentally sound decisionmaking by creating an agency environment that encourages all employees to exercise environmental responsibility. ♦

Key Definitions in the Change Agenda

Continual learning—The individual and organizational recognition of the need to look constantly for better ways to accomplish the tasks at hand. This attitude includes a commitment at all levels to obtain skills or abilities through traditional and nontraditional experiences, including assignments, training, developmental opportunities, volunteer programs, and online sharing of information and expertise.

Empowerment—Encouraging employees to take initiative and accept responsibility in responding to agency needs within the boundaries identified by the organization, e.g., resources, the law, customers, strategic trends, etc. Empowerment involves trusting employees based on experience, knowledge, and demonstrated judgment to act in accordance with the vision and mission of the organization.

Shared leadership—Moving from a top-down, control-and-command, hierarchical organizational structure to one in which decisionmaking is shared. After people in traditional leadership roles set clear direction, all members of the organization share leadership in implementing strategies, in carrying out the mission, and in achieving the vision.

Team-based organization—Organizing and accomplishing work through the use of groups of employees brought together because of their skills, not because of their positions or titles. By more fully engaging everyone in the organization, teams help increase the quality of work and speed of production, improve cost effectiveness, and take advantage of innovation. Team members cooperatively and actively work together and share ideas, resources, and information.

Strategy Conference Lesson: If It's To Be, It's Up to Me!

By Mike Wright, PPQ, Gulfport, MS

I recently returned to Gulfport, MS, from the APHIS Strategy Conference, and I recall thinking to myself during the flight home that the conference was another instance of APHIS beginning another wonderful initiative that, if brought to fruition, would make an organization that achieves wonderful things and, at the same time, provides a hospitable environment for its employees.

I must say that my expectations that Friday night closely resembled my golf game: I can hit a great drive down the fairway, but my chipping and putting fail me in the end. Similarly, I have seen initiatives like this come and go over the years with the same results: poor followup.

How can this be, I wondered, when APHIS has so many committed employees, all of whom seemed

to be willing to do what is necessary to make the vision real? The conference was well-planned; the facilitators kept this large group engaged and focused. Both in the plenary sessions and in the smaller groups, like the vision element groups or VEG's, all of the AMT members were present nearly all the time and easily approachable by everyone. In addition, the support staff was wonderful, and so were the facilities.

Realizing the Vision

The following Monday, while going through all of the documents I brought home from the conference, I came across my vision strategy commitment sheet, and I suddenly had the answer to my question. The followup depends on me, not anyone else! Rather than wait to see what others do with the vision, I realized that it's what I do with it that will make it real for me and those around me.

In the past, I watched top management demonstrate their commitment (or what I perceived as a lack of it) to give me my direction. Now, I see that I am part of the group that developed these strategies, and it is up to me to deliver.

Keeping Commitments

In times like these, it's easy to be cynical and tribal (to identify more with one's own unit rather than with APHIS), but I actually did what I committed to do on Monday: I created a banner that states my support for the APHIS vision to post on the wall behind my desk. I hope everyone else who was at the conference has carried out their commitments as well. If so, other employees will soon share our excitement, and APHIS will get to that "critical mass" of employees needed to sustain this ambitious change effort. ♦

In the science and technology VEG (top photo), Erich Rudyj (M&B), Ray Sterner (ADC), Peter Fernandez, (IS), and Trang Vo (PPD), consider the options.

Laura Henze (ADC), and Karin Shank (IS), discuss marketing and communication for one APHIS. Both photos by Laurie Smith



Where Do I Begin, and How Do I Move Toward the Vision?

By Anna Cherry, Public Affairs, LPA

If you have read the APHIS vision on the first page of this pull-out section, you have already begun! The best way to start moving into the future is to examine your daily work life and incorporate the vision into it. Read the change agenda items and think about how you can make them real to yourself and your unit. Already a variety of change agenda initiatives is occurring, and in the fall, after the implementation planning session with the champions, there will be many more initiatives. Here is a list of things you can do to get involved. There is plenty of excitement and challenge to go around.

Beginning Steps

- Think about the change agenda items. If you have specific ones you are interested in and would like to work on, fax your ideas and expertise to the champion listed or to Bill Zybach of M&B's Organizational Development (OD) staff, at 301-734-4984. The champions and the OD staff encourage and welcome all input.

- If you or your work group is already doing something that fits into the change agenda, or if you are planning to start something, please let *Inside APHIS* know. The newsletter plans to regularly cover APHIS' move toward its vision. Fax change agenda items to LPA at 301-734-5221. Please include a contact and phone number.

- Read *Inside APHIS* and other agency documents. Staying informed about all of the things going in APHIS will help us all learn what is working and what is not. Information-sharing is a two-way street. We all need to provide input and seek out information.

What Happens Next?

After participants in the strategies conference nailed down the change agenda, their next tasks were to list examples of ways the change agenda could be implemented. These examples included everything from encouraging employees to think and act globally to managing information as an agency resource. Some ideas were for the organization, some for the program units, and some for

individuals. All ideas were designed to move APHIS towards its vision. By developing a wide range of options, participants hope to encourage all employees to add their input, continuing to expand the possibilities for making the vision a reality.

Roadmap to Change

On August 24-25, the change agenda champions and their designated support representatives will reconvene for a 2-day implementation planning session. The goals of this meeting will be to provide an overall roadmap to the change process; clarify roles of the champions, change agents, and staff support; devise a plan for implementing each of the strategies; and agree on a method for ongoing tracking and coordination.

Be ready for a call (or many calls) for volunteers. Be thinking about what you can contribute. The champions know that they will need many people to help make the vision a reality and move APHIS into a bright future. ♦



APHIS PHOTO BY LAURIE SMITH

Conference participants Richard Kelly (left) and Bill Wallace, both of PPD, discuss the change agenda in their feedback group.

Better Than a Check in the Mail for VS Employees

This month VS employees will be getting a survey in the mail. If they complete and return it, this survey has the potential to enhance their role in VS' future.

A survey of all APHIS employees was one of the strategies adopted at the vision strategy conference to ensure that the workforce of the future is the right one. The VS workforce planning group already has taken a step in that direction with this survey.

Change Strategy

"We know we'll have a smaller workforce in the future, so it's important to utilize all the talents of that workforce," says VS' Julia Heamon, coauthor of the survey and a member of the VS workforce planning group. "Information from the survey will also help us plan the training our employees will need to perform well."

"We hope VS employees will see completing the survey as an opportunity," says workforce planning team member Frank Murphy of R&D, who wrote the survey with Heamon. "We want to make things different in a positive way."

Heamon and Murphy started with an R&D survey, modified it, and got input from the VS workforce planning group. In June they tested their new survey on a cross section of new and

seasoned employees before obtaining approval of the VS management team.

"Completing the survey is voluntary," says Murphy. "We are asking VS employees to list their knowledge, skills, abilities, and experience (KSAE's)." Survey results will go into a data base, probably in Oracle.

Unique Abilities

"Most of us think that we don't have special skills or talents," says Heamon, "but we all have unique abilities. If we knew our employees' skills, we might not need to contract some things we do. We'd use our employees instead."

The agency already uses special talents when it knows about them, Murphy explains. In two recent examples, Lisa Rothe of R&D in Ft. Collins, CO, conducted "train the trainer" class at Plum Island, NY, saving APHIS about \$1,000 per day (the cost of a contractor). R&D's John Coakley of Groton, CT, and REAC's John Kinsella of Annapolis, MD, taught a bird identification course for PPQ officers at Jamaica, NY, saving the agency about \$1,200 per day in contractor costs.

"These are the kinds of things we are looking for, says Heamon. "Employees might have skills not necessarily applicable to a present

position but valuable to the agency nevertheless."

Talents and Experiences

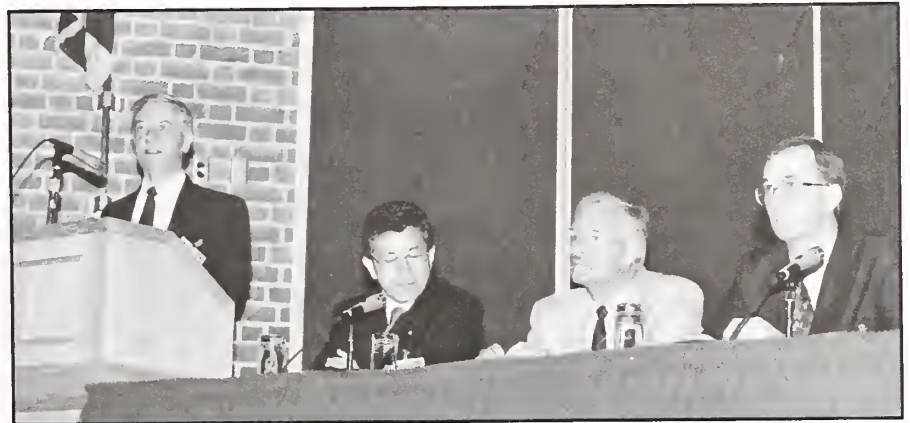
Murphy says employees might not think to list some of their talents and experiences in the survey, so he offers some of his own KSAE's as examples: "I'd probably say that I have lived in Europe and Saudi Arabia, have worked as a reporter for NBC in New York, speak and read German, act in Frederick-area theater groups, and volunteer as an assistant scoutmaster."

"The survey will help us identify employees whose talents include knowledge of the community, or who work with children and are 'kid-friendly,' or who may be members of groups such as Toastmasters," Heamon continues. These people can help coach others who have speaking engagements, or we will know who to send out to talk to groups and reach out to the community."

The workforce planning team will update the information in the data base regularly so that the survey accomplishes its intended purpose—putting the right people in the right place at the right time. With the cooperation of employees, VS expects to increase job satisfaction, plan for its future, and realize the potential of a diverse workforce. ♦

Panel Assesses World Status of Bovine Tuberculosis

Donald Luchsinger, VS acting deputy administrator, gave opening remarks for an international panel on an overview of the world situation at the International Symposium on Bovine Tuberculosis in Animals and Human Beings held in May 1995 at the University of Maryland, College Park, MD. Members of this panel (from left to right) included Armando Mateos Poumian of Mexico, Jan Haagsma of the Netherlands, and Stuart MacDiarmid of New Zealand. USDA agencies sponsoring the symposium were APHIS, the Cooperative State Research Service, the Agricultural Research Service, and the Food Safety and Inspection Service. Additional sponsoring agencies included the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention,



APHIS PHOTO BY LAURIE SMITH

the National Institutes of Health, and the agriculture ministries of Australia, Canada, Mexico, and New Zealand. According to VS' Mitch Essey, this symposium set precedent by having numerous

sponsors and by providing a worldwide forum for researchers and animal and public health officials to share information about bovine tuberculosis. ♦

Children Come to Work With Parents in a Fun-Packed Day

Participation in Take-Your-Daughter-to-Work Day broadened in most agency offices this year to include sons, too. Despite the controversy that continues to rage around whether or not boys should participate in a day that the Ms. Foundation for Women organized for girls, the children who came to work with their parents this past

April reacted enthusiastically to the chance to see what their parents do.

Field offices newly participating in the event include the Port of Hidalgo, TX; the combined offices of the National Monitoring and Residue Analysis Laboratory (NMRAL), PPQ's Southeastern Regional office, and PPQ's Imported Fire Ant Laboratory in Gulfport,

MS; VS' National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL) in Ames, IA; and VS' Western Region office in Englewood, CO. Headquarters employees participated for the third year, bringing 220 children to a new workplace—the Riverdale, MD, building. Parents in PPQ's Jamaica, NY, office participated for the second year.



Gulfport

At Gulfport, 30 children of the compound's 80 employees started out the day with breakfast at the PPQ Southeastern Regional office. Michael Wright, regional operations officer, met with the children about PPQ's role in protecting U.S. agriculture. They then spent time in regional offices actually performing tasks in the personnel, budget, procurement, and computer sections.

In a tour of NMRAL, the children watched laboratory demonstrations. "To demonstrate the pH of several household liquids," says Mike Legendre, BBEP laboratory manager, "Lisa Mosser, BBEP chemist, and I used paper coated with an extract of purple cabbage leaves.

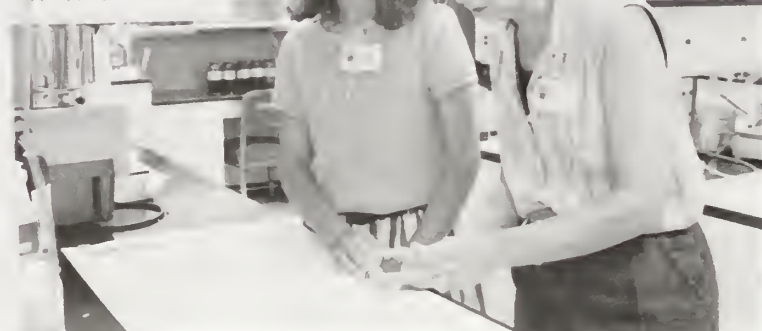
Lisa and I demonstrated chromatography, the science of separations, by separating out the four main fractions of components of grape soda—flavorings, red dye, blue dye, and sugars.

"Perhaps a demonstration on temperature made the greatest impression on the children," Legendre continues. "I asked them what would happen if I threw a rose on the floor. They said some of petals might fall off. We all watched it fall, and nothing happened. Then I emerged the rose in liquid nitrogen and dropped it. It shattered like glass."

At PPQ's Imported Fire Ant Laboratory, research entomologist Tim Lockley talked to the children about the effects, both good and bad, that arthropods have on humanity and the environment. In this laboratory the children also handled live specimens of the Madagascar hissing cockroach.



SAFETY GLASSES
MUST BE WORN
IN THIS AREA



At lunchtime, all compound employees joined the children for a barbecue on the grounds. In the afternoon the children met canine officer Albert Roche and beagle Crystal of the Beagle Brigade and participated in physical fitness activities ranging from step aerobics to water balloon toss. For the last hour in the day, children visited with their parents at their work stations.

Animals stole the show at the VS Regional Office's event in Englewood, CO. Surrounding Scarlet the lamb are (clockwise) Robert Nervig's son Ross and daughter Kelsey, employee Kathay Kratcha, and Rene Wing's son Chris. APHIS photo by Andrea Maestas

BBEP chemist Dorothy Ladner shows daughter Ashlee how she performs pH tests for pesticide residues in the lab at Gulfport, MS. Sun Herald photo by Vernon Mathews

Hidalgo

At the Port of Hidalgo, where 14 PPQ employees work, 7 daughters came to work with a father or mother, receiving hands-on training in their parents' occupations and getting the feel for a typical day.

"Looking for bugs and diseases seems to come naturally to kids," commented Ruben Ruiz, who is also the public awareness coordinator for the Port. "They couldn't believe that something their parents got paid for was so much fun!"



"Look Dad. My arm is 15 inchworms long," says Joanna Alanis, daughter of PPQ officer Joe Alanis, at the Port of Hidalgo, TX.

APHIS photo by Ruben Ruiz

Helping PPQ officer Ruben Ruiz inspect broccoli imported from Mexico are, from left, Joanna Alanis, Amanda Sanchez, and Nicole Ruiz.

APHIS photo by Ernesto Solis

Kids pose with PPQ officers at JFK. Back row, from left are AOIC Oscar Cruz, K9 officer Jim Armstrong, Shanta Simpson, Allison Bange, K9 officer Dan Polliard, Denise Carbuccia, and PPQ officers Carmela Morris and Greg Bange. Front row are beagle Golde, Marie Limpahon, Kevin Russo, Maureen Carbuccia, Basirat Alaga, and Mike Russo.

APHIS photo



JFK

Eight children, aged 8 to 14, accompanied their parents to work at the John F. Kennedy Airport. Mary Benzie, Oscar Cruz, and Carmela Morris coordinated a day of international travel-related activities for these children.

The children started their day viewing blueprints of all the terminals. Then accompanied by tour guide Greg Bange, they hopped on the airport bus and visited two of the terminals. At a tour of the British Terminal, they sat in the Concorde's cockpit. They lunched, courtesy of Rogers Cafeteria, in the International

Arrivals Building, where they saw their PPQ parents inspecting luggage of international passengers. They learned to identify insects and noxious weeds. They saw Beagle Brigade teams at work. They visited the observation tower and watched planes taking off and landing on the runway.

"PPQ is where we want to work when we grow up," said the daughters of Denny Carbuccia.

"The children enjoyed everything," says Morris, "but the overwhelming favorite was sitting in the pilot's seat on board the Concorde."



NVSL

At NVSL, employees brought sons, daughters, and other close relatives to work. A planning group of NVSL employees designed a program to give the children an overview of the NVSL work day and to stimulate their interest in laboratory work.

"The demonstrations that I liked the best were the ones that helped me understand what my dad does," comments Emily, daughter of Steve Hennager of the Diagnostic Bacteriology Lab.

"We had 12 girls and 8 boys, aged 10 to 18 years, says Pat Foley, an organizer in the Veterinary Biologics Lab. "Their experiences included performing the



brucellosis card and hemagglutination inhibition tests, candling eggs, exploring epidemiological software on the computer, becoming acquainted with our animal colonies, examining insects and bugs of veterinary significance, identifying skulls, teeth, and various organs of different species, speciating bacteria based on their colony and biochemical characteristics, and learning all there is to know about liquid nitrogen."

Beagle Sparky and partner Tom Miller of Chicago's O'Hare Airport were on hand to demonstrate and explain agricultural quarantine inspection mission and methods. During a program break, the children restored their energy with sundaes that they made themselves.

"My favorite parts were the animals, the ice cream, and the Beagle Brigade," said Tyler, stepdaughter to Larry Elsken in the Veterinary Biologics Lab.

"Both children and employees seemed to have a great time," Foley comments. "We are already tossing around ideas for next year's program." ♦

In a lab at Ames, IA, Jeni Bungert's daughter Molly, Deb Brock's daughter Ashley, and Sharon Jenkins' daughter Katharine observe Janet Payeur display a cow's trachea, esophagus, and lungs. APHIS photo by Pat Foley

At Ames, IA, Connie Stevens, procurement and administrative services, and son T.J. join Chris Shafer, Brady Platter, and Andy Pedersen in identifying ticks. APHIS photo by Pat Foley

Internet, from page 2 A Guided Tour

"Our 'guided tour' provides a pictorial view of APHIS activities," Mark continues. "A sampling of picture titles includes 'See no weevil,' 'How much is that doggie in the window?' 'Shamu and friend,' 'Four and twenty blackbirds,' and 'End in sight for brucellosis.'"

Internet Working Group

Internet Working Group members who were most active in developing the home page include, in addition to Mark, Keith Reding, BBEP; Scott Florcsk, ITS; Brian Ross ITS, Mary Ann Hines, LPA; Steve Jung, VS; and Patrick Volpe, NBCI.

"Now that the Web pages are operating, the next step is to expand them," comments Mark.

Folks in the units are working on unit home pages that will be added to our Web as they are complete.

"Our Web pages also provide the public with a way to contact us about other kinds of information we may have available," Mark says. ♦

ADC Employees Host Assistant Secretary in Western States



APHIS PHOTO BY DON HAWTHORNE

Acting Assistant Secretary Pat Jensen discusses ADC's role in assisting agriculture with a Montana sheep producer (center) and ADC Montana State Director Larry Handegard. "I enjoyed the Assistant Secretary's visit," says Handegard. "It gave ADC a chance to explain how we assist producers in the lambing business." Jensen's 3-day trip included a look at ADC research activities at the program's new National Wildlife Research Center in Fort Collins, CO, a trip to Montana to review the wolf reintroduction program, a tour of lambing operations, and a trip to a sheep camp where predators recently killed some sheep. "Pat was sincerely interested in the ADC program," says Don Hawthorne, ADC Associate Deputy Administrator, who accompanied Jensen on the trip. "Everyone she met was impressed with her knowledge of chemistry, biology and the problems facing producers."

Series on Domestic Violence Reflects Employees' Concerns

Recently, five agency organizations collaborated to offer headquarters' employees seminars on violence in four groups—children, spouses, elderly, and employees.

"The idea to sponsor the seminars came out of the Work*Family*Life Council," says council member Carmen Queen-Hines, who was one of the organizers of the seminars. "We tapped into the resources of the community to get speakers for the talks."

Coping With Violence

"I think the violence of the Oklahoma bombing made me interested in finding out more about violence in our society," says Cin-dee Dunn, another organizer on the Civil Rights Enforcement and Compliance Staff. "What we were trying to do in each seminar was to make employees aware of the signals and signs to look for and give them some strategies and resources to cope with violence."

The speaker on violence by and against children was attorney William Reichhardt, whose specialty is family law, and whose

experience includes cases tried in the Fairfax, VA, juvenile and domestic relations district court. Diane Salen, a corporal with the Prince Georges County police department, facilitated the seminar on spousal abuse. Salen currently works in the education division, where she teaches fellow officers and serves on the county's domestic violence coordinating committee.

Neglect of the Elderly

Leading the topic "Neglect, exploitation, abuse, and violence against the elderly" was Angela Heath, nationally recognized gerontologist, author, and lecturer, who created the first program kit, *Caregivers in the Workplace*, for the American Association of Retired People. Heath is also known for developing model gerontological programs. Pitch hitting for Employee Assistance Program counselor Stosh Comisiak, who was in Oklahoma counseling employees and families of the victims, were two physical security specialists, Jode Eley and James Hinant from the General Services Administration's Federal Protective Service. These two led the seminar on violence, threats, and intimidat-

tion in the workplace.

"One of the benefits of attending the seminars was the chance to hear other employees' experiences," comments Betsey Garver of PPD, an organizer who was representing the Women's Advisory Council. "For example, one employee related a story of a caregiver who moved herself into her mother-in-law's home and began demanding money. Another employee's experience with elder care was positive: a nurse's aide hired to care for the employee's grandmother was so solicitous, the family asked her to move in, and she provided quality round-the-clock care for 3 years."

Video Available

Employees interested in viewing the series on videotape can borrow a video from the headquarters library (301-374-5240) or fax your request to 301-734-8391. The group hopes to sponsor a followup seminar on the Oklahoma violence at a later date. ♦

Employees Pay Tribute to Fallen Oklahoma Colleagues

Across the Country Many Office Sites Hold Tree-Planting Ceremonies



APHIS PHOTO BY VALERIE FARQUHAR

On May 25, employees of PPQ's Bozeman, MT, Biocontrol Facility and the Forest Service planted a tree on the grounds of the laboratory. The plaque in front of the tree says "This flowering thunderchild crabapple, *Malus 'thunderchild'* was planted 05/25/95 in memory of all the individuals that perished in the Oklahoma City Federal Building on 04/19/95. Among the 119 Federal workers who died, 7 USDA APHIS employees will be remembered."

In Wallingford, CT, employees planted a weeping cherry tree on June 2 to ease their grief. From money they collected, they plan to place a bronze plaque at the base of the tree.

In Ft. Collins, CO, employees held a Living Tree Tribute on June 14. They planted a redbud, the State tree of Oklahoma.

In Albuquerque, NM, employees centered their memorial around a flag-raising ceremony at the dedication of their new building on May 23. They, too, planted an eastern redbud in memory of the Oklahoma dead.

In Oklahoma City, surviving employees, family, and friends paid tribute to the dead in a service on May 17. ♦

Some people are mean,
Some people are rude,
But no one's as mean as that
dude.
Innocent lives stopped before they
started.
The parents and kids were brutally
parted.
They lost their father, they lost
their mom.
They lost their grandpa, their
grandmas too,
I feel sorry, and so should you.
But as you see, life goes on,
And we remember those that are
gone.
A tree is planted in memory of
Those of us who have gone above.

—Miel Medley
daughter of Terry Medley,
acting associate administrator

In Riverdale, MD, employees held a Day of Remembrance on May 24. Early in the day, surviving family members dedicated seven redbud trees—one for each employee who died. At the larger ceremony, they also planted a dogwood tree in remembrance. In the photo below, Oklahoma survivor Brian Espe speaks to about 1,000 employees at the service.



APHIS PHOTO BY LAURIE SMITH

1995 Calendar of Events

July

- 16-21 10th International Congress on Bear Research & Management (ADC)
- 16-21 International Veterinary Immunology Symposium (NVSL)
- 17-20 Mid-Atlantic Plant Molecular Biological Society meeting (BBEP)
- 21 Federal Employees Group Life Insurance open season ends (HRD)
- 21-29 Joint Southern Africa-United States Arbovirus workshop (NVSL)
- 22-27 Seminar on Animal Welfare, sponsored by the Scientists Center for Animal Welfare (REAC)
- 23-28 Fifth International Rangeland Congress (ADC)
- 24-28 Structured Query Language & Oracle Browser course (NVSL)
- 25 Work Conference; VS and State employees, Northern Region
- 25-27 Evaluation Training for Northern Region AVIC's
- 29 American Society of Plant Physiologists meeting begins (BBEP)
- 30 Annual Employee Relations/Labor Relations Conference (NVSL)
- 31 Thrift Savings Plan open season ends (HRD)

August

- 1-2 Veterinary Biologics public meeting (BBEP)
- 1-3 MIS Reference File Subcommittee meeting (ADC)
- 1-4 Annual Employee/Labor Relations Conference (HRD)
- 2 American Society of Plant Physiologists meeting ends (BBEP)
- 4-9 Symposium on Eradication of Pseudorabies Virus (NVSL)
- 5-12 The Society for Industrial Microbiology meeting (BBEP)
- 7-10 Central Region EEO committee meeting (VS)
- 8-10 Bird Strike Committee - USA 1996 (ADC)
- 8-10 Repellants in Wildlife Management (ADC)
- 10-14 Wildlife Foreign Animal Disease Course (NVSL)
- 10-14 Workforce Diversity Steering Committee meeting (HRD)
- 12 Foreign Animal Diseases Awareness Seminar for veterinary practitioners, Puerto Rico Veterinary Medical Association meeting, Southeastern Region (VS)
- 12-16 Microscopy Society of America/Histochemical Society annual meetings (NVSL)
- 12-16 The American Phytopathology Society meeting (BBEP)
- 13-16 The National Plant Board meeting (BBEP)
- 13-17 2nd International Arctic Ungulate Conference (ADC)
- 13-17 Central Region Safety Council meeting (VS)
- 15-17 Mexican Land Border Port meeting, Central Region (VS)
- 19-22 Association of Veterinary Microbiologists (NVSL)
- 21-25 Texas ADC program State meeting

September

- 8-13 International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (ADC)
- 11-15 VSMT meeting, Northern Region (VS)
- 11-15 Northern Region AO/ASA meeting (VS)
- 12-17 The Wildlife Society 2d Annual Conference (ADC)
- 13 Riverdale, MD, dedication ceremony
- 14-16 The Role of Restoration in Ecosystem Management symposium (ADC)
- 15-20 Central Veterinary Conference (NVSL)
- 16-21 National AOAC meeting (NVSL)
- 17-22 Office International des Epizooties Standards Commission meeting (NVSL)
- 18-19 North Central Avian Disease Conference (NVSL)
- 18-20 Versatility of Wetlands in the Agricultural Landscape (ADC)
- 18-21 Southeastern Nuisance Wildlife Management Operators' Shortcourse (ADC)
- 18-22 VS Area Work Conference, Northern Region
- 18-22 Office Automation Training Course (NVSL)

- 20 VS Field meeting and Defensive Driver Training, Northern Region
- 21 American Heritage Day/Speech on APHIS' New Vision (VS, REAC, ADC, PPQ)
- 22-24 1995 Western Bird Banding Association meeting (ADC)
- 23-27 49th Annual Conference of the Southeastern Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies (ADC)
- 26-28 VS Animal Identification Coordinators' meeting, Northern Region
- 26-29 Oak Savanna and Woodland Ecosystem Conference (ADC)
- 28 APHIS Day at Honolulu International Airport (PPQ, VS, REAC, ADC)
- 30 APHIS-Wide Early Out Retirement authority ends (HRD)

Riverdale Employees!

About 4 months ago we moved into our new building. The newness, the fitness center, the day care facility, and all the other niceties give us so much to celebrate. Mark your calendars for September 13, the day of the building dedication ceremony.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
ANIMAL AND PLANT HEALTH INSPECTION SERVICE

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